intersection will remove the costs currently incurred by NS to manage and maintain the existing at-grade intersection and will eliminate the potential for train/train collisions.

2. *Improve the safety, reliability, and efficiency of CSXT freight trains* - Currently CSXT has approximately 10 freight trains per day that travel over the existing at-grade intersection. The Project will not only eliminate the long delays for CSXT that occur on a daily basis, but it will also eliminate many of the traffic delays for the surrounding residents, commuters and businesses that occur whenever CSXT freight trains block roadway/rail at-grade crossings for extended periods. The reduction in delays will have secondary benefits, including a reduction in fuel consumption caused by idling vehicles, as well as a reduction in the noise caused by trains idling for extended periods of time in one location. Grade separating the CSXT and NS Mainline tracks will also allow CSXT to increase their operating speeds from 15 mph to 35 mph for a single mainline track in the trench, which will improve the efficiency of CSX's rail operations.

3. *Provide for the safe operation of the existing and future passenger rail* - Currently, two Amtrak passenger trains (*Crescent* trains #19 and #20) pass through the existing CSXT/NS rail/rail at-grade intersection on a daily basis. NCDOT and the City of Charlotte have proposed (as part of a separate joint CATS/NCDOT project[1]) to relocate the existing Amtrak station approximately 0.64 miles south of the proposed grade separation Project. This station relocation will result in an additional six Amtrak passenger trains (*Piedmont* trains #73, #74, #75 and #76 and *Carolinian* trains #79 and #80) passing through the existing at-grade intersection. The PIP includes near-term and long-term plans to enhance passenger rail service between Charlotte and Raleigh, which will result in additional passenger trains traveling through the existing CSXT/NS rail/rail at-grade intersection. The Project will grade separate the existing CSXT/NS at-grade intersection and reduce the potential for passenger train and freight train conflicts. Furthermore, the Project is within the federally designated Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor connecting the northeastern states and Washington, DC through Richmond, VA to Raleigh and Charlotte, NC to Atlanta, GA.

4. *Provide for the safe operation of the planned future commuter rail* - At the time this document was prepared, CATS had developed a plan to provide commuter rail service from Mooresville to Center City Charlotte, as part of the CATS 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan.[2] This plan, referred to as the CATS North Corridor Commuter Rail, will utilize the existing NS O Line, located to the west of the existing CSXT/NS diamond (the O Line is currently not in service at this location). Since the O Line also crosses the CSXT tracks, the Project will separate the future commuter rail from the CSXT tracks and eliminate the potential conflicts between the CATS commuter trains and CSXT freight trains.

[1] Environmental Assessment - Charlotte Gateway Station. April 2009.
http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/planning/facilities/gatewaystation/Pages/Projectfacts.aspx
[2] CATS 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan. Adopted November 15, 2006.
http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/planning/2030Plan/Pages/default.aspx